DRAFT STAFF WORKING PAPER

Notes from October 22, 1997 Meeting of the Interagency Development Team

Flip Chart Note

Agreed: IDT will forward a recommendation to management that no distinction be made between on-stream and off-stream surface storage.

Meeting Notes

While it is generally true that off-stream storage has lower environmental impacts than on-stream storage, this axiom does not hold true in all cases. Increasing the size of existing facilities on the Sacramento and San Joaquin River systems may in some cases be a more environmentally acceptable alternative to construction of a new off-stream impoundment. In any case, it would not be acceptable from a 404(b)(1) point of view to avoid a full analysis of alternatives.

Mark presented water supply reliability and storage considerations to establish a foundation for the discussion of storage related to Alternative 1. Mark summarized supporting work which suggests that water supply benefits of surface storage increase on a continuum up to about 3 MAF on the Sacramento River system and up to about 2 MAF South of Delta off-aqueduct storage. Delta water quality standards, environmental considerations, and economic factors will ultimately drive size decisions. Without more detailed, site-specific information, it is difficult to determine optimal storage volumes. Mark suggested that the IDT's focus should be on identifying a range of storage that is compatible (in terms of resulting Delta flow patterns) with each alternative. The minimal volume of storage would be the volume required to make the alternative work (provide ERPP flows unmet by transfers, allow required temporal shifting of Delta exports away from periods critical to fisheries, etc.) The maximum amount of storage would be the largest quantity that provides incremental benefits, given a set of Delta operational parameters associated with an alternative.

Some IDT members indicated a preference to adopt Mark's suggestion, as represented in the table found on page 3 of the staff paper, "Storage Considerations for Optimized and Preferred Alternatives". Others were unconvinced.

There was a suggestion to show a minimum, a maximum, and a number representing the IDT recommendation which takes into account factors such as supposed implementability and other Solution Principles.

Another suggestion was to decide how much storage is actually going to be part of the CALFED

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program, and leave others to develop storage to meet any needs above that. Others felt a "small vision" does not fulfill CALFED's mandate to develop durable solutions.

There was a suggestion that IDT interpret its commission as including the ability to recommend policy choices to the decision makers, as appropriate.

It was pointed out that, if the decision makers are to understand the storage considerations presented by IDT that it will be necessary to prepare the presentation carefully so as to be understandable. It was clear that the water supply discussion presented at the Policy Group meeting the previous day was not well understood.

There was an objection to use of the term "optimized" to describe the products IDT is developing. There was not a suggestion as to what terminology should be used instead.

There was a suggestion that IDT should perhaps be bold and recommend the "real" maximum and minimum storage. According to some published studies something like 9 MAF could be proposed as a maximum for the Sacramento River watershed. Reactions to this suggestion included reference to Lester's remarks at the Policy Group meeting to the effect that such a declaration would come at the cost of loss of consensus among the stakeholders.

It was emphasized by several participants that we have an assignment to come back four weeks from now with three optimized alternatives, and in 8 weeks to identify the Draft Preferred Alternative to be recommended to management. Much of the work that is needed cannot realistically be done in this time frame, and will have to be done over the ensuing year prior to finalization of the draft document. There was discussion of the need to create realistic expectations on the part of CALFED agency managements, BDAC, stakeholders, and the public as to what is going to be included in the draft document.

There was a suggestion of identifying groundwater conjunctive use as a priority, and leaving the surface storage numbers as recommended by Mark.

A question arose as to what is the function of Mark's paper, and is it the intention of IDT to spend time revising it.

It was recommended that IDT define its tasks for the next four weeks and get it clear among the group. One members indicated that what we were doing that day is not what was expected. The expectation was that we were going to optimize alternative 1 and specify a small range of upstream and off-aqueduct South of Delta storage, instead of working on the storage paper. The suggestion was to come up with a more tangible number for storage.

Another person indicated it is desirable to be as explicit as possible, but we will only be able to generally describe cost per acre-foot and environmental impacts. This will limit our ability to define storage explicitly.

It was suggested that minimum required storage could be based on how much environmental

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water would be needed by each alternative. A discussion of equity ensued, and was related to the discussion of the 1/3 environmental, 1/3 agricultural, and 1/3 municipal split of storage benefits that was held at the Policy Group meeting the day before. There seemed to be a consensus among the IDT that the principle of equity must come into play in some form, though equity could be judged over the entire program, not feature by feature. There was discussion of the need to look at the totality of yield.

There was a discussion of in-Delta or near-Delta storage to accommodate pumping cessation for a period of 30 days or possibly more. There was general agreement that the cost of such storage would be rather high, but it was also pointed out that twice as much storage capacity South of the Delta would be required to provide the same yield as storage in or near-Delta.

It was proposed that Optimized Alternative 1 be essentially as described as Alternative 1C, without in-Delta or near-Delta storage to accommodate pumping shutdowns.

It was specifically recommended the writeup for Alternative 1 include discussion of how habitat distribution would be different with this alternative, and why that would be so.

Further consideration of Alternative 1 was put over for the next meeting. It is expected that the water use efficiency sub-team will bring a writeup that will help us to reach closure on the recommended Alternative 1.

Alternative 3 was discussed briefly, and it was decided that the discussion would center on Alternative 3 as proposed by USF&W. This alternative proposes dual intake points on the Sacramento River, probably at Hood and Freeport, a 10,000 cfs isolated facility feeding into Clifton Court and to an expanded forebay, probably consisting of Victoria Island, that would be connected to Clifton Court. No pumping would occur in the South Delta. A 3,000 cfs intake would be constructed on the San Joaquin River upstream of the Delta. Water would be supplied from the isolated facility to Delta islands to compensate for negative water quality impacts induced by operation of the isolated facility.

Information was provided that indicated that the San Joaquin River is probably capable of providing a maximum of something over 1,000 cfs, once in-stream needs are accounted for, and that, on average, flows in the San Joaquin River in the summer months are below 3,000 cfs. It was also pointed that the mineral quality of water to be had from the San Joaquin River is relatively low.

Alternative 3 will be discussed at the next meeting. In preparation for that meeting:

1. Patrick will get with Darryl Hayes and other USF&W staff to explore the benefits of dual intake facilities on the Sacramento River, and will be prepared with a report at the next IDT meeting.

2. A better explanation will be provided of why the Core Group centered on the features suggested to the IDT as potentially belonging in the optimized alternative.

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3. There needs to be a more detailed analysis to determine whether a 15,000 cfs screen capacity with associated pumps would enable continuous export of 15,000 cfs. Though this was the understanding of some IDT members based on the previous meeting where screen and hydrodynamics experts discussed these matters, these experts will be re-contacted and the information confirmed.

4. Get cost per acre-foot of yield estimates for the various types of storage under consideration.

5. Confirm the South Delta agricultural demand that would be supplied under the USF&W proposal.

Process Improvement

1. For each IDT meeting, put a chart on the wall that shows what is to be discussed and what products are expected.

2. Discussions of the IDT should be committed to flip charts to enhance general understanding of what is being agreed to.

3. To the extent possible, meeting materials should be handed out in unified packages, rather than piecemeal.

4. There was a suggestion, rejected by the group, of limiting meetings to half days.

Next Meetings

The next meeting of the IDT will be on October 28. An additional meeting will be scheduled for October 31, if deemed necessary by the IDT at their next meeting.

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